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SOPHRONIA

AND

HILARIO:

AN ELEGY.

Hail wedded Love! true Source of human Bliſs!

Here Love his golden Shafts employs, here lights
His conſtant Lamp, and waves his purple Wings,
Reigns here and revels; not in the bought Smile
Of Harlots, loveleſs, joyleſs, unindear'd
Caſual Fruition. MILTON.

By CHARLES CRAWFORD, Eſq.
Author of the DISSERTATION on the PHÆDON of PLATO.

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SOPHRONIA;

AND

HILARIO.

BLESSING and bleſt in one another's Arms,
SOPHRONIA and HILARIO flouriſh'd late;
She in the Splendor of all Woman's Charms,
He with whatever Man receiv'd of Fate.

Large and unbounded as their Hearts their Wealth,
As ample as their never-failing Love:
Theirs were the Bleſſings of unvaried Health;
And Friends they had whom Intereſt could not move.

Together down the Stream of Life they ſail'd,
Jocund and chearful as the blithſome Spring;
No Day but as a Day of Joy they hail'd;
No Night that did not Bliſs extatic bring.

Two beauteous Children grac'd their faithful Bed;
A Boy, the Image of his manly Sire,
Whoſe Infant Accents liſp'd the Words he ſaid,
Whoſe Eyes ſent forward half their Father's Fire.

The other Infant, tho' of tend'reſt Age,
Brought like the prattling Boy no Cauſe for Care;
Save but their Maker's Bleſſings to engage,
And their young Minds to Virtue's Paths to rear.

In Youth HILARIO revel'd in Exceſs,
When on the Iſis' verdant Banks he ſtray'd;
Wine, Woman, Frolic, Equipage, and Dreſs,
Their lawleſs Empire o'er his Mind diſplay'd.

But Love of Woman with a Tyrant's Pow'r,
Stifled the meaner Paſſions of his Mind,
While like the Bee he ſipt at ev'ry Flow'r,
Free and unſettled, greatly unconfin'd.

His Shape was elegantly fram'd to pleaſe
Tho' ſinew'd were his Limbs, and in his Air
Sat manly Dignity, with gentle Eaſe,
And all the various Charms that win the Fair.

With ſweet, with ſoft Politeneſs to endear,
Not Gallia's Sons knew more the boaſted Art;
With eloquent Addreſs to pleaſe the Ear,
By unſeen Magic to inflame the Heart.

Full many a Maid in Youth he captive led,
Who guileleſs liſten'd to his ſoothing Tale;
But in the Tricks of Vanity unread,
Their Shame he only whiſper'd to the Gale.

Tho' gay, tho' thus indulging each Deſire,
Yet all the Learning of the Schools he knew;
Endow'd with Hampden's Virtue, Hampden's Fire;
Bleſt with the Pow'rs which Genius gives to few.

But when SOPHRONIA ſanctified his Name,
Prudent ſhe ſtrove with an attentive Art,
His lawleſs ſteps to Virtue to reclaim;
And of a generous made a conſtant Heart.

O! ſhe was more than amorous Youths could paint,
Form'd to forbid, and yet enforce Deſire:
She look'd, ſhe mov'd a Venus, and a Saint,
A Saint to check, a Venus to inſpire.

—A Virgin-Snow diſſolving at his Breath,
Sweetly diſſolving in his ſoft'ring Arms;
To others cold as is the Ear of Death,
Which nor the Voice of Love nor Muſic charms.

Thus happy in themſelves, by all belov'd,
Courted by all, ſave thoſe whom Envy griev'd,
The Bleſſings of the Country round, they prov'd,
The Rich they pleas'd, the neighbouring Poor reliev'd.

Thus while they frolick'd in a Sky ſerene,
While mildeſt Zephyrs form'd the gentle Air;
Sudden a Storm aroſe which ſoon as ſeen,
Was ſeen Deſtruction in its Front to bear.

They ſkim the glaſſy Surface now no more,
The Tempeſt ſcowls, the raging Billows foam;
The Days of jocund Pleaſure all are o'er;
The Deep receives them in its duſky Dome.

It chanc'd HILARIO and his much lov'd fair,
Were once invited to a nuptial Feaſt;
Where was (O that he never had been there!)
FLORIO, a foppiſh Lord, another Gueſt.

Here while the copious Draughts of generous Wine,
Had ſhewn the hidden Treaſures of the Heart;
When Men their falſe and fooliſh Shame reſign,
And pour forth Wit devoid of formal Art;

Of beauteous Woman, and of Love they ſpoke,
Of Books, of Arts, of Manners, and of Man:
Scarce paſt a Word without th' attendant Joke,
And ſwift on Feet of Joy the Moments ran.

Now, gay LOTHARIO-like, the Peer produc'd
The Liſt of Fair-ones whom his Arts deceiv'd:
" Theſe by my ſoothing Wiles (he ſaid) ſeduc'd,
" The ſad Inconſtancy of Man have griev'd."

HILARIO ſmiling ſaid, " My Lord, 'tis true
" You are allow'd the Fav'rite of the Fair;
" But they are fond of Paraquetto's too;
" With thoſe their Wonder, not their Love, you ſhare.

" But

" But ſhould I e'er as Sedley gallant prove,
" Were I poſſeſs'd of his intriguing Art;
" I would not thus divulge my meaneſt Love,
" But with the crimſon Drops that warm my Heart *."

A fix'd Contempt to FLORIO long he bore,
For this and that he tried SOPHRONIA's Faith;
Tho' with SOPHRONIA he prevail'd no more,
Than with full many poiſon'd by his Breath.

Tranſported *more* with Rage but *much* with Wine,
A Blow upon his Cheek young FLORIO gave;
For which the Caitiff ſhould for aye repine,
Nor reſt till brought with Sorrow to the Grave.

HILARIO

* As dear to me as are the ruddy Drops
That viſit my ſad heart. *Shakeſpeare's* JULIUS CÆSAR.

HILARIO beaten thus, thus vilely ſpurn'd,
(By Rage his pond'rous Strength increaſing more *)
Smote with fierce Fury at the Thing he ſcorn'd,
And hurl'd him almoſt breathleſs to the Floor.

Now eyeing with Diſdain his proſtrate Foe,
From whom e'en now unwilling to refrain;
"Thy Blood (he ſaid) ſhall waſh away the Blow,
"Thy Blood the beſt Coſmetic for the Stain."

(When unprovok'd as mild as Zephyr's Wing,
That o'er the Violets perfumed Heads,
Sent from the purple Boſom of the Spring,
With balmy Gentleneſs, benignant ſpreads:

And

* ——————— Et Vim ſuſcitat Irâ. VIRGIL.

And yet as rough, enchaf'd his gen'rous Blood,
As is the ruffian Winter's rudeſt Gale;
That whirls the Mountain-Pine from where it ſtood,
A vaſt unwieldy Ruin to the Vale *.)

SOPHRONIA now, the weeping Saint, appears,
Home to retire entreats her Lord, her Love;
Unmov'd, unchang'd, by his SOPHRONIA's Tears,
Ne'er did her Huſband, her HILARIO prove.

HORATIO too his oldeſt neareſt Friend,
With ſtrong Entreaties urg'd him to retire;
Bade him the Buſineſs to his Care commend;
For O! he lov'd him with a Brother's Fire.—

* This is an Imitation, and conſequently a weak one, of ſome excellent Lines in *Shakeſpeare*'s Cymbeline.

HILARIO whiſper'd firſt in FLORIO's Ear,
" At two Days hence in France you'll not forget,
" The reſt's entruſted to HORATIO's Care;
" But damn'd be he who firſt declines to meet."

Meanwhile HORATIO his Requeſt obey'd,
The Time for Combat mention'd and the Place:
" Then be it as you wiſh, (young FLORIO ſaid)
" I too will court Revenge for this Diſgrace."

Ah, who their Agitation wild can paint,
When on the Bed his Limbs HILARIO threw!
When firſt he preſt his much lov'd beauteous Saint,
A thrilling Coldneſs o'er his Body flew.

" Tell me of this the melancholy Cauſe!
" Why heaves thy Breaſt with Grief unknown to mine?
" Why ſwerve you thus from Wedlock's ſacred Laws?
" As well as Pleaſures, let us Sorrows join.

" What

" What thus afflicts my Huſband and my Life?
" O ſpeak, HILARIO ſpeak! (ſhe weeping ſaid)
" Tell me, (ſhe cried) O tell thy conſtant Wife!"
—And in his Boſom hid her lovely Head.

" O my SOPHRONIA! 'tis for thee I grieve;
" For thee I tremble, for myſelf unmov'd;
" For thee, (he ſaid) for thee I wiſh to live;
" For never Man ſo dearly, warmly lov'd.

" But know, thou lovely tend'reſt Fair-One, know!
" (For to conceal it from thee were in vain)
" FLORIO and I can ne'er ſurvive that Blow,
" For that or one or other muſt be ſlain.

" Tomorrow, O my Fair-One! we muſt part,—
" FLORIO and I beyond the Seas muſt meet;
" But baniſh Trouble from thy anxious Heart,
" For me victorious ſhalt thou ſurely greet!"—

" And

" And wilt thou then thy dear SOPHRONIA leave
" To mourn thee as a Turtle mourns its Mate?
" Wilt thou (ſhe cried) thy Abſence let me grieve,
" The keeneſt Torture of malignant Fate?

" When thou art loſt, where ſhall I find Relief?
" Where eaſe my loaded and my tortur'd Breaſt?
" Each Day will be a Day of ſullen Grief,
" And each ſad Night devoid of balmy Reſt.

" When ſtarting frighten'd from tumultuous Sleep,
" (If I can ever ſleep when thou art gone!)
" How ſhall I lie the lingering Night and weep!
" How ſhall I chide the creeping Moments on!

" When I'm awaken'd by the hollow Wind,
" (For well thou know'ſt me liable to fear!)
" How ſhall I ſtart my Huſband not to find
" To ſhield me from the Voice my Fancies hear!

" Whene'er I walk the Garden I ſhall ſay,
" This Flow'r HILARIO planted with his Hand;
" But now its vivid Colours all decay,
" And mourn HILARIO in a foreign Land.—

" Here, ſhall I cry, my ſweet HILARIO lay;
" Theſe were the Books my Huſband often read;
" How chearful did he greet each riſing Day!
" But now he's abſent, or perhaps he's dead."

" Forbear thy fond Complaint, my Love, forbear!
" Nor thus indulge thy viſionary Grief!
" For, O SOPHRONIA! to my Heart thrice dear,
" This Arm ſhall bring for all our Cares relief.

" This Arm the Miſcreant ſhall chaſtiſe full well,
" The Wretch accurſt who cauſes all thy Woe;
" Impious who durſt (O! do I live to tell?)
" Profane HILARIO's Perſon with a Blow.—

" Thou wouldſt not have me ſure ſurvive the Shame
" Unleſs aton'd for by his deareſt Blood;
" Then let me caſt Diſhonour from my Name,
" And make it blazon where it whilom ſtood."

Thus paſt the Night in ſympathetic Tears,
Thus in fond Sighs the loving Wife complain'd,
Thus the kind Huſband half beguil'd her Fears;
Free from thoſe Fears ſhe but a while remain'd.

Ah how unlike do Sighs expreſſive prove!
Theſe roſe long-labour'd with a lingering Smart;
Not ſuch as thoſe but late of rapt'rous Love,
Which quick, ſhort-fetch'd, flow'd eaſy from the Heart.

How keen the Anguiſh of their Parting prov'd,
How cruel was that fatal Word!—Farewell!
Thoſe only who have thus ſincerely lov'd,
Can feel with Juſtneſs, or with Truth can tell.

HILARIO lean'd upon HORATIO's Arm;

" Thou know'ſt me not a Coward, Friend—but here!
" O thou Supreme! do thou defend from Harm!
" Angels (he cried) attend! protect my Fair!"

Her Huſband oft the ſweet SOPHRONIA preſt,

" O guard him, Heav'n! protect his precious Life!
" Let him, O God, in ev'ry Thing be bleſt!
" And ſafe return him to his loving Wife!

" Thou know'ſt that I will ever conſtant prove!
" Farewell, HILARIO! (thrice ſhe ſaid) farewell!
" In all thou doſt, remember me, my Love!"
—She ſpoke, and in her Servant's Arms ſhe fell.

" Recall thy wonted Courage to thy Heart!
" For now (HORATIO cried) thou muſt away!
" Now is the time, my deareſt Friend, to part!
" 'Tis Honour calls—thou canſt not, ſhalt not ſtay."

Ye who like ſweet SOPHRONIA love, ye Fair!
Ye in your own ſoft Boſoms beſt can know,
By tender Sympathy, SOPHRONIA's Care!
—Nor is it Manhood's Shame that Tears ſhould flow.

E'en now, e'en now, the pearly Drops oft fall,
Oft blot the Paper as the Poet writes:
He flies obedient to the Paſſions' Call,
And what the Paſſions prompt, their Slave indites.

What tho' in the dark College Walls confin'd,
'Mongſt muſty Books from Scenes of Mis'ry free;
Yet ſtill the native Candour of his Mind,
Bends willing, Senſibility! to thee:

Reveres and ſtill adores thy tender Sway,
Tho' oft, full oft, of Pleaſures it beguiles;
Yet oft thro' it the Heart is ſweetly gay,
With thee, EUGENIUS! or when DELIA ſmiles.——

To the appointed Place both punctual went,
The Ground was meaſur'd, and the Fight began;
In vain their miſſile Load, the Piſtols ſent,
Each 'gainſt the other bent his Rage in vain.

His Sword HILARIO brandiſh'd in the Air,
" Come on (he ſaid) come on, thou damned Thing!"
Manly he mov'd, devoid of Coward Fear:
But o'er his head Death flaps his raven Wing.

E'en when he deem'd the Victory his own,
And ruſh'd to meet his Foe with furious Hate;
His eager Foot tripp'd on an unſeen Stone:
Then ghaſtly ſmil'd, well-pleas'd, malignant Fate.

His Foe, ungen'rous, ſtabb'd him to the Heart,
Stabb'd him ignobly as the Hero fell;
The Blood ran guſhing from the gaping Part:—
What Tongue can this to ſweet SOPHRONIA tell!

When in the Agonies of Death he lay,
Fierce and diſtorted betwixt Rage and Pain;
When groaning unreveng'd his Soul away,
That thus he fell, e'en thus ignobly ſlain:—

His Friend, the Murd'rer with his Sword approach'd,
" Defend thee, coward Knave! (HORATIO cried)
" Or be for ever by the Brave reproach'd,
" That thus by unfair means HILARIO died."

His Arm the Weapon to that Boſom ſent,
In which it burn'd to ſlake its eager Thirſt;
The Soul full inſtant from the Body went;
—His Arm the dying worthleſs FLORIO curſt.

Inſtant the Blood into his Hand he took,
And plac'd it tepid on HILARIO's Cheek:
Well-pleas'd HILARIO caſt a grateful Look,
And falter'd theſe laſt Words in Accents weak:

" Thanks

" Thanks to my noble Friend! (he ſmiling ſaid)
" O ſpare SOPHRONIA, GOD! my Children ſpare!"
On the dank Heath then fell his gen'rous Head;
His Soul flew upwards to the ambient Air.

Thus when the Theban and as WOLFE of late,
The joyful News of Victory receiv'd;
No more they dreaded the chill Stroke of Fate;
Nor at th' Approach of Death while conqu'ring griev'd.

—Ah who the Agonies of Grief can paint,
When ſweet SOPHRONIA heard the diſmal Tale!
Thoughts are too weak, and Language all too faint,
Here at Deſcription ev'ry Pen muſt fail.

When firſt ſhe heard HILARIO was no more,
Depriv'd of Speech upon the Earth ſhe fell;
All vital Motions ſeem'd extinct and o'er.
—Such Woes might melt a Savage Heart to tell.

Anon from ſilent Grief ſhe riſes wild;
For her dear Lord, her Huſband oft ſhe cries:
Now in her Arms ſhe claſps his much lov'd Child;
And fierce Diſtraction flaſhes from her Eyes.

"I ſee him now (ſhe frantic ſhrieks aloud)
"Aloft in Air he mounts on radiant Wings,
"He vaniſhes from Sight in yonder Cloud,
"And with the Seraph Choir a Seraph ſings."

"Where (cries the roſe-cheek'd prattling Boy) O where?
"And is he gone, Mama, for ever gone?
"O! has he left us both to ſorrow here?
"And will Papa ne'er ſee again his Son?"

Now craz'd ſhe runs to ſeize HILARIO's Sword;
This, this (ſhe cried) ſhall heal my raging Pain;
This an Aſylum for my Griefs afford,
And cool the Fires that ſhoot along my Brain.

Thus the fierce Harpy Madneſs ſeiz'd her Mind,
And with unhallow'd Talons grip'd her Prey;
While in a Dungeon's loathſome Gloom confin'd,
In wild Vagaries ſhe conſumes the Day.

At laſt theſe furious Sallies of the Soul,
Subſided as the Sea when Storms grow calm;
She now begins theſe Paſſions to controul;
And Friendſhip now affords its ſacred Balm.

Now ſhe repines like NIOBE all Tears;
Now ſullen ſits the melancholy Day:
Now thro' the Cloud once more the Saint appears,
But all her Fleſh diſſolves thro' Grief away.

Now ſadly wed to Recollection pale,
She mourns reclining o'er his fleeting Shade;
Now to his Spirit tells her piteous Tale;
"O my HILARIO!" (oft ſhe weeping ſaid)

" Look down, and comfort thy afflicted Love!
" Diſdain not, tho' in Heav'n, SOPHRONIA's Voice!
" But thro' this Life, my Guardian Angel, prove!
" And in that Heav'n, together we'll rejoice."

So bends the Lilly when its Stalk is broke,
It rears aloft no more its fragrant Head;
But falls to Earth conſuming at the Stroke,
Fled all its Sweets, its vivid Beauties fled.

Struck with a Thorn ſo PHILOMEL complains,
When fell it rankles in her gentle Breaſt;
Thus mad at firſt ſhe tells aloud her Pains,
Then melancholy thus ſhe ſings to Reſt.

FINIS.